United Nations A/C.2/71/SR.21

General Assembly
Seventy-first session

Official Records

Distr.: General
10 November 2016

Original: English

Second Committee

Summary record of the 21st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 25 October 2016, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Djani (Indonesia)
later: Mr. Andambi (Vice-Chair) (Kenya)

Contents

Agenda item 20: Implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements and on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be sent as soon as possible, under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, to the Chief of the Documents Control Unit (srcorrections@un.org), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org/).

16-18563 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 20: Implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements and on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (A/71/347 and A/71/356)

1. **Ms. Kacyira** (Deputy Executive Director and Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on entitled "Coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda" (A/71/356), said that that report had been transmitted to the Committee pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2016/24. It provided a description of the activities undertaken by UN-Habitat in cooperation with other agencies and organizations of the United Nations system in the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

2. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements and on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)" (A/71/347), she said that the report had been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/210. It provided a description of the activities of UN-Habitat during the reporting period, including an update on progress made in the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III).

3. The New Urban Agenda was an action-oriented agenda for sustainable urbanization which would strengthen the role of local governments and harness the potential of partnerships across society. The Agenda brought new areas of responsibility for UN-Habitat, particularly regarding coordination and follow-up of its implementation. In that regard, UN-Habitat would work in close collaboration with other entities of the United Nations system.

4. Turning to governance reform of UN-Habitat, she said that the Committee of Permanent Representatives working group on the work programme and budget, established by the Governing Council in April 2015, had made a number of recommendations to the Executive Director on key managerial and programmatic issues.

5. With regard to the financial situation of UN-Habitat, she recalled that as at 31 May 2016, UN-Habitat had received 52 per cent of projected non-earmarked income and 25 per cent of projected earmarked income. It was implementing a strengthened resource mobilization strategy aimed at widening its donor base to include emerging economy countries and was streamlining full-cost recovery to enable more accurate attribution of funds to earmarked projects. Those measures would be further strengthened in 2016. It continued to control core expenditure through a wide range of measures, but the savings arising from those measures had been eroded by a significant reduction in non-earmarked voluntary contributions, and by exceptional items and circumstances, resulting in an increase of the core deficit from $1.2 million in 2014 to $5.5 million in 2015. Those trends threatened the financial viability of the Programme's core capacity.

6. Many donors and Member States had been awaiting the outcome of Habitat III before deciding on any new commitments; as such, an injection of financial resources into the core budget of the Programme would be required to maintain its current level of programme delivery. Furthermore, additional human resources capacity would be needed to take on the new responsibilities mandated by the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

7. UN-Habitat welcomed the evidence-based independent assessment agreed to in the New Urban Agenda as an opportunity to consider key structural and substantive questions about the future role of the Programme; however, the outcome of that assessment could be pre-empted by depletion of reserves related to the deficits in funding. She appealed to the Committee and to all States Members of the United Nations to respond to the need for bridging finance for 2016 and 2017.

8. **Ms. Pamaranon** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that work to support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and its follow-up and review mechanism must begin forthwith. The Agenda was a delicate compromise. It was focused, forward-looking and action-oriented and yet struck a technical and political balance and was inclusive. The Group of 77 and China reaffirmed the

principles of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and the twin goals of achieving adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development. They further reaffirmed the right to development in accordance with the Declaration on the Right to Development, in particular for developing countries.

9. The role of international cooperation and the commitment of developed countries were crucial in providing adequate, sustainable and predictable means of implementation, including financing, official development assistance (ODA), technology transfer and capacity enhancement as means to support national efforts and capacities of developing countries to deal with human settlements and implement the new Agenda. Existing gaps in capacities between developed and developing countries must be acknowledged.

10. In implementing the New Urban Agenda, particular attention must be given to addressing the unique and emerging urban development challenges faced by developing countries, especially countries in special situations, including African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. Many middle-income countries, conflict and post-conflict countries, and countries and peoples living under foreign occupation also faced specific challenges. Different national realities, capacities and levels of development must be taken into account and national policies and priorities respected.

11. A strong organizational mechanism for implementing the New Urban Agenda, which emphasized the role and expertise of UN-Habitat, must be put in place. The Group continued to firmly support enhancing the effectiveness of UN-Habitat in both its normative and operational work, including providing capacity development and tools to national, subnational and local governments for planning and managing sustainable urban development.

12. The Group of 77 and China looked forward to an evidence-based and independent assessment of UN-Habitat and the forthcoming high-level meeting of the General Assembly, at which the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the positioning of UN-Habitat would be discussed.

13. On review and follow-up of the New Urban Agenda, it was important to include the review of global progress in the implementation of that Agenda as part of the integrated and coordinated follow-up process to United Nations conferences and summits, aligned with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the high-level political forum on sustainable development and the quadrennial comprehensive policy review cycles, as appropriate, taking fully into account existing mechanisms, including the UN-Habitat Governing Council.

14. **Mr. Gafoor** (Singapore), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that ASEAN believed that the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development would require all countries to harness the positive force of sustainable urbanization. Cities played a critical role in sustainable development as increasing numbers of people moved to urban centres. The New Urban Agenda reaffirmed the global commitment to sustainable urban development as a critical step for realizing coordinated, integrated sustainable development at all levels with the participation of all relevant actors.

15. Urbanization was changing the face of ASEAN, with urban areas currently accounting for more than 50 per cent of the region's gross domestic product (GDP). It was expected that an additional 54 million people would move into cities in the region by 2025, and cities would account for nearly 40 per cent of its GDP growth through 2025. Such factors were contributing to the creation of an expanding middle class, improved health, education, and infrastructure and a growing workforce. The region's cities faced numerous challenges to liveability and environmental sustainability compounded by high rates of rural-urban migration and rising affluence and expectations. Urbanization must be managed if its considerable economic, social and environmental benefits were to be reaped.

16. ASEAN had taken steps to ensure that its cities and urban areas were environmentally sustainable and that its peoples' social and economic needs were met. Through the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint (2009-2015), the ASEAN Initiative on Environmentally Sustainable Cities and the ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities,

individual and collective efforts to improve the quality of water and air had been intensified through initiatives to reduce industrial and transportation pollution. Experiences, expertise and technology continued to be shared in areas such as urban planning and governance.

17. Building on the ASCC Blueprint (2009-2015), ASEAN leaders had gathered in November 2015 to sign the Kuala Lumpur Declaration entitled "ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together". That landmark Declaration had highlighted six strategic measures: enhancing participatory and integrated approaches to urban planning and management for sustainable urbanization; strengthening the capacity of national and local institutions; promoting coordination among relevant sectors to provide access to clean land, green public spaces, clean air and water, and sanitation; promoting cities that were friendly to people of all ages and abilities; strengthening positive economic, social and environmental linkages between urban, peri-urban, and rural areas; and strengthening policies and strategies for the effective management of the impacts of population growth and migration on cities.

18. There could be no sustainable development without sustainable urbanization. The role of UN-Habitat in developing normative knowledge and providing capacity development and tools to Governments was critical in that regard. The successful implementation of the New Urban Agenda would contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, including Sustainable Development Goal 11 on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

19. **Mr. Rattray** (Jamaica), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community, (CARICOM), said that CARICOM welcomed the adoption of the New Urban Agenda, which demonstrated a collective commitment to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The importance of well-planned and managed urbanization in contributing to sustainable development, which was an overriding imperative, could not be overstated.

20. Rapid urbanization in the Caribbean region had led to a housing deficit resulting in a large share of the population living in informal settlements vulnerable to landslides, flooding and storm surges. Inefficient land markets, inaccurate property registrations and land disputes had compounded the problem and slowed housing construction programmes. A key problem in future would be protecting homes against rising sea levels given that half the population in the Caribbean region lived within five kilometres of the coast. Accumulated losses from disasters could severely and swiftly undermine years of social and economic development.

21. CARICOM supported the attention given in the New Urban Agenda to renewed local-national partnerships, in which private stakeholders and local governments served as strategic partners of national governments in support of national development targets. It was also in favour of decentralization and local self-governance, with effective contributions from local authorities and civil society to strengthen urban governance and management. In that context, urban-rural and cross-sectoral links and equitable distribution of resources across the urban-rural continuum were of great significance. Critical infrastructure must be prioritized in order to ensure coherence and coordination in integrated development efforts.

22. CARICOM advocated the continued strengthening of the work being done by UN-Habitat to support developing countries in such areas as improving urban legislation, planning and design, housing and slum upgrading, disaster risk reduction and rehabilitation. The significance of maintaining strong political will and of research and capacity development as well as the need to identify the financial means to implement the New Urban Agenda could not be overstated.

23. **Mr. Cortorreal** (Dominican Republic), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that CELAC welcomed the New Urban Agenda and reiterated its common aim of achieving all the goals of the 2030 Agenda, including Goal 11. The eradication of poverty was indispensable for sustainable development, along with a commitment to combat growing inequality and exclusion through the implementation of effective public policies to prevent geographical segregation and environmental degradation, which were being exacerbated by rapid urbanization.

24. Sustainable urban development was indispensable to achieving overall sustainable development. The New

Urban Agenda must be implemented within a framework of human rights and gender equality, placing a priority on equitable and sustainable human settlements. Cities must be acknowledged as cultural and recreational centres where diversity could be freely expressed. Political, social, economic and cultural participation must be guaranteed for people of all ages. Women must be empowered to participate in development and decision-making. Cities must be accessible for all persons, in particular persons with disabilities, in terms of their design, transportation, and communications.

25. The right to the city was a governing principle to ensure that city dwellers were able to fully and effectively exercise their human rights. When those rights were fulfilled and all actors assumed their responsibilities, urban development would effectively generate the opportunities that humans had sought since they began to concentrate in urban settlements.

26. **Ms. Naeem** (Maldives), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, said that the New Urban Agenda provided the international community with an opportunity to consider the interlinkages between the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The mechanisms for the implementation of those agendas needed to be coordinated, and standardized reporting and follow-up data should be encouraged in order to reduce the reporting burden on small States, especially small island developing States.

27. Small island developing States had diverse sizes and types of urban spaces, and diverse definitions of what urban spaces were. As a result, they were often left out of discussions and data concerning only "cities", even though 59 per cent of the population of those States already lived in cities, and much of the remaining population lived in villages and towns. The metrics for urban trends should therefore include human settlements with populations under 100,000 in order to assist small island developing States in tracking urbanization challenges.

28. Urban design and development experts should devote their attention to settlements of all styles and sizes. Increased technical and human capacity-building were needed, in addition to support for long-term planning efforts including data collection and analysis. Best practices should be shared and new investment was needed to ensure that local ownership was in place and that cultural heritage and local governance were appreciated. The urban and rural development concepts outlined in the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway were consistent with the New Urban Agenda.

29. The New Urban Agenda rightly devoted attention to improving connectivity, coastal management, sustainable consumption and production, and resilience in the face of climate change. The increasing frequency and intensity of natural disasters threatened urban environments in small island developing States since their human settlements were close to the oceans and seas. The damage caused by those disasters, such as the recent Hurricane Matthew, undermined the economic growth and sustainable development efforts of small island developing States.

30. The optimism of the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements should be revived. There could be no sustainable human settlements without action on climate change, awareness-raising and innovation in the areas of data and technology. In the current connected world, developments in urban areas impacted those in rural areas, and vice versa. The Alliance of Small Island States would therefore work with UN-Habitat and other key actors to implement the New Urban Agenda across all human settlements so as to make them more functional, resilient, accessible and sustainable.

31. **Mr. Bolaji** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Group had adopted a common continental position on the New Urban Agenda because it believed that urbanization should be regarded as a process which, if properly harnessed, had the power to bring about structural transformation, including industrialization, and social inclusion, as envisaged in the 2030 Agenda. More than half the world's population reportedly lived in cities and towns, especially in Africa and Asia. Africa's rapid rate of urbanization posed challenges to policymakers seeking to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth and development, and accordingly required urgent attention and action. Urban settlements around the world and especially in Africa faced challenges such as climate change, resource depletion, food insecurity, economic instability, unemployment, crime and poverty. Social and economic inclusion was therefore

needed. That involved upgrading informal settlements, mobilizing urban financing from local and foreign investors, and improving human capital through equal access to education and health care.

32. The African Group was concerned by the assertion in the World Cities Report 2016 that the current urbanization model was unsustainable in many respects and that the pattern of urbanization needed to change in order to better respond to challenges and address issues such as inequality, climate change, informality, insecurity and unsustainable forms of urban expansion. The implementation of the New Urban Agenda would require an enabling environment and a range of means of implementation, including access to technologies, capacity-building, enhanced knowledge-sharing, and financial resources, which would be needed at the subnational and local levels where the bulk of the New Urban Agenda would be implemented. Domestic resource mobilization would continue to be necessary, but ODA was an important complement and played a catalytic role in such mobilization.

33. UN-Habitat should be strengthened so that it could carry out its mandate. The African Group considered that it was important to keep the resource needs of the Programme and the United Nations Office at Nairobi under constant upward review so as to enable the effective delivery of services.

34. **Mr. Sevilla Borja** (Ecuador) said that, with representatives of 167 States Members of the United Nations, over 45,000 registered delegates and around 100,000 participants in the drafting of the New Urban Agenda, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) had been one of the highest-attended conferences in the history of the United Nations. It had also been one of the most inclusive processes in the history of multilateralism. More than 2,000 mayors had been in attendance, and civil society, non-governmental organizations and academia had also been represented. The option of holding the next Habitat conference after 10 years instead of 20 should be considered because of the rapid developments in the world's urban areas and the need to ensure proper follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

35. Local authorities should adopt the New Urban Agenda as the political guide for their future work since national Governments would not be able to achieve the goals set forth in the Agenda without the active participation of local governments and civil society. The right to the city, a focus of the Conference's proceedings, recognized the right of residents of cities and human settlements to live and be productive in a just, inclusive and sustainable environment.

36. Every effort must be made to reduce inequality, in particular by preventing land speculation and the related capital gains. If it was unacceptable to speculate on foodstuffs during famines, land speculation should similarly be penalized since land was key to urban development. More decisive action was therefore required to prevent a minority from becoming rich at the expense of the community as a whole.

37. The New Urban Agenda sought to increase resilience to natural or man-made disasters, and to promote the right to decent housing and full access by deprived vulnerable groups, the homeless and persons with disabilities, as well as respect for the integrity of refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants. The time had come for national Governments, local authorities and all relevant actors to take action to design, implement and monitor plans and programmes that reflected the vision and principles of the New Urban Agenda while ensuring inclusiveness and eliminating segregation in urban and rural areas.

38. **Ms. Ponce** (Philippines) said that her country had been a co-facilitator in the negotiations surrounding the New Urban Agenda and, in that capacity, had sought to ensure that it would be people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented. Urbanization continued at a relatively high pace in her country, and one result had been a steady increase in economic growth from 5.8 per cent in 2012 to 7 per cent in 2016. However, urbanization had also created a host of challenges. Sporadic and unplanned growth of urban areas had resulted in poor services for managing solid waste, waste water, air quality and transportation and had also led to social exclusion as evidenced by the proliferation of informal settlements. Uncontrolled urbanization had also been linked to environmental degradation, natural resource depletion and the extinction of wildlife.

39. Those challenges required multi-stakeholder partnerships at all levels. Her delegation therefore welcomed the call for States to set up mechanisms for implementing, coordinating and monitoring the New Urban Agenda, as well as evaluation mechanisms to assist in addressing rapid urbanization and poverty. The evidence-based and independent assessment of UN-Habitat in its capacity as a focal point in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda should be conducted and concluded at the earliest opportunity.

40. *Mr. Andambi (Kenya), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

41. **Mr. Sinha** (India) said that people were moving to urban areas for a variety of reasons, but primarily in search of education, skills and jobs. Although urban areas were often centres of economic growth and prosperity, they were increasingly unable to provide basic services to their inhabitants, and much urbanization was unplanned. Better resourced and managed urbanization could become a driving force of sustainable economic growth and development, and social transformation.

42. As a founding member of UN-Habitat, his country valued its relationship with that Programme and welcomed the adoption of the New Urban Agenda. One sixth of the world's population lived in India. Its pace of urbanization matched its rapid economic growth. About 377 million people, or one third of the population, lived in urban areas, which generated over two thirds of the country's GDP and accounted for 90 per cent of Government revenues. His Government had launched three flagship urban development initiatives, namely, a mission for rejuvenation and urban transformation through infrastructure development; a smart cities mission on founding 100 cities in which the quality of life would be enhanced and a clean and suitable environment would be provided; and a programme on housing for all. Together, those initiatives were the expression of a holistic, technology-led and people-centred vision of urban development, and were supported by special programmes on manufacturing, digital technology, skills development and start-ups, all intended to reinvigorate cities as engines of economic growth. Those efforts were accompanied by a rural development strategy, known as the national rurban mission, which aimed to ensure integrated development and strengthen the complementarity between rural and urban settlements.

43. Economic development was inextricably linked to sustainable urbanization. Developing countries were undergoing rapid urbanization but their per capita incomes were low. Urban development should therefore be integrated into efforts to carry out broader socioeconomic planning to combat poverty, promote inclusive growth and reduce environmental stress.

44. **Mr. Castañeda Solares** (Guatemala) said that the New Urban Agenda was an opportunity to achieve the goal of leaving no one behind and strengthen the global political commitment to sustainable development by means of a renewed global strategy on urbanization. However, in developing countries and especially in middle-income countries such as Guatemala, movements of people were part of the socioeconomic transformation that had traditionally occurred in that country and had for decades increased the urban population. Migration had increased the pressure on urban areas that lacked a good infrastructure and had no land use plans or institutions strong enough to serve people seeking opportunities. That land must therefore be prepared for conversion into orderly, inclusive, competitive and resilient cities, meaning that urban expansion must be contained and ecosystems must be protected.

45. For the first time, his Government was establishing an urban agenda matching the global agenda. It was therefore important to learn from the successful urbanization experiences of other countries. A focus on urbanization was an opportunity to redefine his country's development model. The Guatemalan urban agenda was intended to translate goals, guidelines and policies into realities on the ground, especially in the areas of inequality, environmental sustainability, capacity-building, food security and infrastructure, so that the State could provide the right conditions for orderly growth over the next 50 years. Implementation would nevertheless be the responsibility of local Governments and metropolitan regions on the basis of citizen participation.

46. The Guatemalan urban agenda sought to provide the mechanisms that would turn urbanization into the backbone of his country's development model. His Government had set up a compliance, monitoring and assessment committee to ensure successful

implementation of the national development plan, and would draft an action plan for the implementation of the agenda.

47. The relationship between urban and rural areas was of particular importance for his country since the gap between the living standards of the rural and urban populations needed to be narrowed. Inclusive and resilient urban planning was therefore key to avoiding disorderly expansion of urban areas and a lack of a regulatory framework, land-use plans, policies and laws.

48. **Mr. Fondukov** (Russian Federation) said that the adoption of the New Urban Agenda would not have been possible without taking into account the views of the broad range of participants and the specificities of individual regions; the thematic and regional consultations organized as part of the main negotiating process had also contributed to that outcome.

49. His Government's urban development, construction and housing and public services policy was already aligned with the New Urban Agenda. Given current urbanization rates in the Russian Federation, new approaches were being sought to such challenges as the growing concentration of populations and industries within limited areas, increasingly crowded transportation systems, environmental pollution and the need for access to safe water sources and sanitation, improved waste removal and processing, increased energy efficiency and maintenance of safety and social stability in populated areas. A range of measures was being implemented to address urban development issues, specifically as part of a national programme to provide affordable, comfortable housing and municipal services for Russian citizens and under targeted federal programmes on such issues as housing and clean water and also housing and essential services in seismic areas. Public-private partnerships that aimed to upgrade and improve the energy efficiency of municipal facilities and introduce the use of information and communications technologies into urban infrastructure management systems were additional drivers of development.

50. Every country had unique experiences and practices that could be of use to the international community. At Habitat III, the Russian Federation had therefore proposed the establishment of an open, continually updated international compendium of best practices in urban development and public services improvement, which could offer significant value to municipalities and national Governments.

51. The support of the United Nations system for national implementation of the New Urban Agenda was important. Accordingly, the Russian Federation emphasized the significance of UN-Habitat as a key body to coordinate intergovernmental sustainable urban development work in the context of the United Nations system and build the relevant national capacities of Member States. In the light of the issues facing UN-Habitat and the decisions set forth in the New Agenda, it was also necessary to reinforce and reinvigorate the work of UN-Habitat.

52. **Mr. Al Zaabi** (United Arab Emirates) said that his country was one of the most urbanized in the world and was located in a region of aridity and high temperatures, making resource management and energy efficiency critical priorities for its rapidly expanding economy. Its cities were nevertheless ranked among the most liveable in the region.

53. Tolerance was key to sustainable economic growth. The United Arab Emirates was one of the most diverse countries in the world and its open labour market attracted people from all corners of the world. The vibrancy of its cities was a rebuttal to the recent global increase in xenophobia. The implementation of the New Urban Agenda should therefore include education and awareness-raising about tolerance. Regulations and enforcement were needed to stamp out violence or harassment based on cultural, religious or other differences. Cities had to be safe for all residents.

54. Universal access to energy should be one of the main goals of the New Urban Agenda. Energy would enable all the Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved and was fundamental for dignity and sustainable economic growth. Sustainable energy was important not only for the implementation of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change but also for economic growth and job creation. His Government had issued mandatory building codes that had cut energy and water consumption by over 33 per cent, and massively deployed smart meters. It had also introduced tariff schemes that had cut waste while protecting the needy. Dubai had set a target of 75 per cent clean energy by

2050 and was a pioneer in vehicle electrification, driverless cars and public transport.

55. His Government attached great importance to integrated strategic planning: the "UAE Vision 2021" programme aimed to make his country the most liveable in the world, with seven sub-themes ranging from the rule of law to environmental conservation. Ideas and experiences should be shared across cities, countries and regions in order to drive innovation and change behaviour. As part of its contribution to the New Urban Agenda, his country would host the 2020 World Expo in Dubai as a platform for innovation on how to harness the potential of cities as hubs of sustainable economic, environmental and social growth.

56. **Mr. Takdir** (Indonesia) said that Governments and relevant stakeholders should take into account the complementary roles of, and the interconnection between, the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Paris Agreement. The New Urban Agenda should complement the 2030 Agenda and its indicators should be linked to those of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Sustainable Development Goal 11.

57. Towns and cities, especially in archipelagic nations such as his, needed to be resilient in the face of rising sea levels and natural hazards. His country's national urban policy and strategy for 2045 included promoting green cities as well as smart cities that were competitive and technology-based and could therefore nurture innovation and productivity. Its national urban system would better integrate urban and territorial planning, inter alia by enhancing land and sea connectivity with a particular focus on coastal cities and on underdeveloped regions. The aim was to achieve sustainable and resilient development with a focus on urban governance and to boost prosperity so as to leave no one behind.

58. The New Urban Agenda should include a review of the mechanisms that enabled partnerships across all major stakeholders and created public spaces for dialogue. South-South cooperation and international partnerships were important as a complement to North-South cooperation, capacity-building programmes should be in place, and means of implementation, including financing, should be assured. His country was ready to implement the New Urban Agenda and willing to share best practices and lessons learned in housing and infrastructure development.

59. **Mr. Alikhani** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the implementation of the New Urban Agenda should take into account the specific needs, conditions and different levels of development of each country, and developing countries in particular. Furthermore, the importance of national ownership of the Agenda could not be overemphasized. There should be no one-size-fits-all approach to the implementation of urban policies.

60. The right to development was an inalienable and indispensable human right for every individual, on a par with all other human rights. An approach based on the right to development was a comprehensive process through which all human rights and fundamental freedoms would progressively be realized.

61. Effective means of implementation, including transfers of technology, technical assistance and financial resources, were needed for the successful implementation of the New Urban Agenda. The normative role of UN-Habitat was the focal point of human settlement issues within the United Nations system. A number of challenges remained to be addressed. Specifically, attention should be paid to the threats and opportunities that resulted from rapid urban growth. Different spheres of Government should ensure a coordinated approach involving the adoption of national urban policies. Efforts should be made to place quality of life at the centre, regenerate national identities and increase citizens' sense of belonging.

62. Fast and safe mobility was an important part of an integrated transportation policy. The interaction between land use and transportation should be revived by introducing rail-based public transport systems in large cities and metropolises. The same applied to inter-urban and intra-urban transport systems. Furthermore, regular monitoring of adopted development plans and their periodic revision should be considered a component of the planning process.

63. **Mr. Mebarki** (Algeria) said that the New Urban Agenda was an important complement to the 2030 Agenda that would allow all people to share in the benefits of urbanization. The international community should ensure that adequate technology and resources

were made available to developing countries. In that connection, he urged wealthier countries to make good on their ODA commitments.

64. Since the year 2000, his country had dramatically reduced its housing shortage through a national programme aimed at providing decent housing with basic amenities to the largest possible number of people. As of 2015, his Government had built almost 3 million units, 60 per cent of them in urban areas and 40 per cent in rural areas. It had also relocated some 200,000 families out of slums, including 45,000 families in Algiers, making that city perhaps the first African capital to be slum-free.

65. **Mr. Mbodj** (Senegal) said that the international community must develop viable partnerships to implement the New Urban Agenda and effect positive economic transformations. Habitat III had taken place as countries were increasingly faced with the adverse consequences of rapid and often uncontrolled urbanization; sustainable urban development was therefore a crucial and cross-cutting factor for economic and social development.

66. The implementation of the New Urban Agenda must emphasize urban planning and reinforce land restructuring and regularization programmes to combat the proliferation of informal settlements. Sustainable urban development had substantial macroeconomic benefits that helped to increase economic productivity and improve people's living conditions. However, despite many such benefits, rapid urban development also presented serious global challenges. To address those challenges, his country had reoriented its national development policy in accordance with the principle of full decentralization, with a view to adapting national and sectoral programmes to regional priorities.

67. The implementation of the New Urban Agenda must also emphasize the promotion of smart and resilient cities, taking into account the need for energy efficiency, and increased financial resources to implement social housing policies and develop infrastructure. Implementation should also focus on policies to restructure urban centres, modernize rural settlements and update urban planning tools, which should incorporate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation mechanisms.

68. **Mr. Cao** Zhiyong (China) said that international cooperation in the area of housing and sustainable urban development needed to be strengthened, especially in order to address the challenges facing developing countries. The New Urban Agenda would serve to guide such cooperation over the following 20 years. The development of human settlements should be aligned with that of the economy, and also with population growth, resource utilization and environmental protection. It was crucial to resolve those issues in developing countries in order to improve the situation for the whole world. The developed countries should create the external conditions for economic and social development in developing countries, and fulfil commitments to financing, technology, open markets and debt relief, so as to strengthen the capacities of the developing countries to address the issues of urban development.

69. His Government had always prioritized the construction and improvement of the environment for human settlements, and had promoted a new form of people-centred urbanization. It was currently implementing large-scale affordable housing projects, improving energy efficiency and emissions reduction in buildings, and upgrading capacities for urban sewage treatment and garbage disposal, and had made remarkable progress in those areas.

70. **Mr. Abdulwahab** (Bahrain) said that balanced urban development was essential to the implementation of Goal 11 of the Sustainable Development Goals on making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Since the adoption of the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements, his country had been committed to creating sustainable cities. With a rapidly expanding population marked by a growing youth bulge, Bahrain had launched a number of pioneering and internationally recognized initiatives to respond to the needs of youth, as well as to empower women. It was working with UN-Habitat to update its housing policy, initially put in place in 2002, to reflect recent social and technological developments, and in particular to promote private-sector involvement and optimal use of renewable energy. Tens of thousands of new units would be built over the next few years. Bahrain had won several United Nations Public Service Awards, and had consistently been highly ranked in the United Nations e-Government Survey and the United Nations

Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report.

71. **Mr. Gayito** (Ethiopia) said that the New Urban Agenda must be implemented in a coordinated fashion with the other international agreements signed in 2015. Cities provided both complex challenges and opportunities; it was therefore imperative to comprehensively and inclusively address their structural problems.

72. His delegation believed that Governments, in collaboration with the private sector, must strive to meet the right to housing for all. In that regard, his Government had been implementing an integrated housing development programme at all levels since 2008 in order to address the country's housing problem. More than 250,000 houses had been built, 200,000 of which had already been transferred to urban residents, including low-income earners. The national housing programme had also created jobs, particularly for youth and women, encouraged saving, improved the capacity of the construction sector, and reduced the number of slums.

73. To address urban unemployment, his Government had also launched an entrepreneurship strategy that encouraged the development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises by creating an enabling business environment and providing training, credit services, and production and sales places. His Government had likewise been expanding social and physical infrastructure in collaboration with the private sector.

74. Despite the considerable results achieved in implementing its urban development programmes, his country continued to face housing shortages, unemployment and a lack of good governance. In order to translate the New Urban Agenda into concrete action, international partnership within the framework of North-South and South-South cooperation must be further enhanced. Developing countries, and least developed countries in particular, must be supported with financing and technology transfer.

75. **Mr. Gouch** (Brazil) said that cities could be viewed as humankind's greatest invention, as they spurred innovation by facilitating face-to-face interactions, encouraged entrepreneurship, and promoted socioeconomic mobility and a more efficient use of natural resources. As the number of urban residents would surpass rural residents by one billion in 2030, with 95 per cent of urban expansion to take place in the developing world, his delegation believed that people had a right to enjoy the numerous benefits conferred by human agglomerations.

76. However, cities also concentrated and sometimes exacerbated environmental, economic and social challenges. Although cities only occupied 2 per cent of the world's land, they accounted for 70 per cent of total energy consumption and 75 per cent of carbon emissions. Moreover, social and economic inequalities reached their highest levels in urban areas. Those challenges could only be overcome by achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions. The New Urban Agenda provided the international community with a comprehensive set of actions designed to ensure social inclusion, environmental protection and economic growth, while acknowledging the central role of local governments and civil society in creating better cities. Those closest to the decision-making processes usually had the best answers to urban challenges. The Agenda also addressed important topics that had not been covered during the two previous Conferences, including balancing the need for compact cities with urban expansion, for upgrading slums without tearing apart the social fabric, and for promoting road safety.

77. In order to implement the New Urban Agenda, the United Nations system must improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its agencies and programmes that dealt with urban development. The Committee had an important role to play in that regard, as it was the locus for discussing the independent analysis requested by Habitat III and for formulating decisions on strengthening UN-Habitat.

78. **Ms. Khin Aye** (Myanmar) said that Myanmar, like many other developing countries, faced many issues arising from the rapid rate of urbanization, and was experiencing pressure on its housing, infrastructure and transport systems, as well as on its environment and communities. Her country was therefore developing national policies to address housing and urban development problems in close collaboration with UN-Habitat.

79. The population of Myanmar was growing at an average rate of 1.3 per cent per year; 70 per cent of

people lived in rural areas. To address the challenges of maintaining an equitable balance between the urban and rural populations in a predominantly agricultural country, her Government had renewed its focus on urban development and housing, with a view to providing housing for low-income groups, reducing poverty, empowering local governments through decentralization and establishing urban-rural linkages and road connectivity for growth and trade. Her country's national urban policy sought to ensure the development of sustainable cities by harnessing the positive economic, environmental and social aspects of urbanization while mitigating its negative consequences. Myanmar would continue to enhance its land administration and management policies and to promote a higher standard of living in rural areas rather than encouraging mass urban migration.

80. Her country was undertaking internal procedures to ratify the Paris Agreement. It had formulated an action plan for 2016-2030 to build resilience to increased risks of natural rapid and slow on-set disasters for all township and city dwellers, and a national climate change programme which identified eight priority sectors, namely agriculture, disaster risk reduction and early warning, forests, public health, water resources, energy, industry and biodiversity.

81. The New Urban Agenda would require effective methods and mechanisms of implementation and follow-up. The role of the international community in supporting developing countries by means of financial assistance, technology transfer and capacity-building would therefore continue to be essential. The implementation of the Agenda must also be mainstreamed into country-level United Nations development assistance frameworks in developing countries and especially least developed countries.

82. **Mr. Andanje** (Kenya) said that the New Urban Agenda established a firm foundation to promote safe, resilient, inclusive and sustainable cities and human settlements. It recognized the numerous development challenges and explored innovative methods of coping with the demographic trends and rapid rates of urbanization that put tremendous pressure on cities, especially in developing countries. The outcome of Habitat III reflected a renewed political commitment to sustainable urban development. However, the implementation of the New Urban Agenda would require both financial and non-financial resources, including ODA as a catalyst to domestic resource mobilization.

83. While only 37 per cent of his country's population currently lived in urban areas, that figure was expected to rise to 50 per cent by 2030, thus requiring increased investment in basic infrastructure and services. Urban-based economic activities represented the bulk of his country's GDP, with cities also accounting for a significant proportion of physical, financial and intellectual capital.

84. His Government's key focus was resource mobilization; its priority was to increase domestic resources above the current 22 per cent of GDP in the medium term. As Kenya had recently become a middle-income country, it anticipated facing challenges in accessing funding from international financial sources. Expenditure and investment in Kenya had been decentralized so as to ensure the autonomy of the 47 counties in designing and managing programmes. His Government appealed for an upscaling of international cooperation to enhance capacity at the county level. It also sought to unlock the potential of the private sector and had introduced measures such as reducing the corporate tax rate for developers in order to address the annual 150,000 deficit of housing units.

85. UN-Habitat must be strengthened to enable it to play a central role in sustainable urbanization and human settlements; adequate and predictable funding was therefore crucial.

86. **Mr. Pinto Damiani** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that the implementation of the New Urban Agenda would be possible only through the collective efforts of the international community. Population growth, as well as the distortions produced by capitalism, had impacted human settlements, housing and the environment and contributed to poverty, internal displacement and forced migration caused by armed conflict. Access to housing was a fundamental human right enshrined in his country's Constitution. In 2011 his Government had introduced a new housing programme, based on the right to land, project financing and direct popular participation, to address the deficit of housing units at the national level, while making communities responsible for 40 per cent of all new housing built as part of the plan.

87. During the past five years, 1.16 million housing units had been built; the goal was to build 3 million housing units by 2019. His country had also launched a separate programme to improve living conditions in existing housing infrastructure in the country's most vulnerable areas. International cooperation and in particular commitments made by developed countries must provide the means of implementation to continue such urban development and housing projects while taking into account the three pillars of sustainable development. Financing and technology transfer must complement the efforts of developing countries to implement the New Urban Agenda. His country had shared its experience in housing and urban development with a number of other countries in the region, and was willing to follow that model with other countries as well.

88. **Mr. Jaime Calderón** (El Salvador) said that his country was committed to implementing the New Urban Agenda in a framework of democratic governance, while recognizing the social function of cities and ensuring equity, gender equality, social inclusion and the full participation of all persons, including minorities and vulnerable groups.

89. His country already recognized the right to housing and was now trying to establish the right to the city and the right to sustainable urban development while ensuring the development of communities and human settlements as well as the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystems. A harmonious relationship between urban and rural settlements was therefore necessary. Cities must be harnessed to promote local development processes aimed at economic solidarity and the equitable allocation of responsibilities and benefits.

90. Although national and subnational efforts were important, international cooperation must continue to play a key role in the implementation of all international agreements. His delegation called on the international community and all organizations involved in urban development to increase their support to developing countries as the latter sought to implement national policies in line with the New Urban Agenda. UN-Habitat was of key importance and must have the necessary capacity to carry out its work.

91. **Mr. Poudel Chhetri** (Nepal) said that the New Urban Agenda must be implemented in an effective manner so as to create just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements and foster prosperity and quality of life for all. The Sustainable Development Goals could not be achieved without making cities and settlements sustainable; the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda must be implemented in perfect synergy and coherence.

92. Like many countries, Nepal was urbanizing rapidly and was therefore committed to creating peaceful, inclusive and sustainable human settlements. Following the devastating earthquake in 2015, Nepal had undertaken massive reconstruction efforts and developed ambitious national programmes to integrate Sustainable Development Goal 11 into its urban planning. However, international cooperation and support including through financing, investment and technology transfer remained essential.

93. As a landlocked least developed country emerging from conflict and recovering from a natural disaster, Nepal faced several specific constraints that might further impede its development. Its development costs were at least 20 per cent higher than non-landlocked developing countries, while further problems such as poverty, investment gaps, low or no access to technology, weak capacity and a narrow economic base, further compounded by the effects of climate change and natural disasters, continued to present obstacles to development. Despite such constraints, however, his country was confident that it would be able to achieve all the development goals and targets with continued cooperation and support from all sides.

94. **Mr. El Nour** (International Organization for Migration (IOM)) said that the New Urban Agenda was a consultative framework for all city inhabitants and a rights-based document that recognized migrants as equal rights holders, in particular with regard to the right to the city. As the international community moved to implement the New Urban Agenda, it should capitalize on opportunities to improve synergies between migration and development, recognizing the positive contributions of migrants to development and giving the latter a chance to contribute to the well-being of cities. Migration needs and priorities must be integrated into city planning, including facilities,

infrastructure and services, with a view to ensuring that no one was left behind.

95. The New Urban Agenda provided an important platform for local government actors and community leaders to work together to facilitate the integration of migrants. Cities often had the highest rates of migrant integration, which resulted in a number of challenges.

96. During Habitat III, IOM had organized a side event on a migration governance framework that introduced the concept of the global governance of migration, an instrument to enhance the well-being of migrants and improve their contributions to development.

97. **Mr. Pinheiro** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that the New Urban Agenda recognized that inclusive and sustainable economic growth with full and productive employment and decent work for all was a key element of sustainable urban and territorial development, in full alignment with the 2030 Agenda. The New Urban Agenda called for ensuring decent work for all men and women, with equal pay; eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence, including in the workplace; promoting employment for youth, women, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, migrants, refugees and persons in vulnerable situations; and increasing productivity by providing access to income-earning opportunities, education, social protection and decent work for all.

98. The economic contribution of the working poor in the formal and informal sectors, particularly women and migrant, domestic and unpaid workers, was recognized in the Agenda, which also emphasized the need for greater formalization and a transition to higher-productivity and value-added sectors, including through diversification, technological upgrading, research and innovation.

99. The New Urban Agenda also supported micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and cooperatives throughout the value chain, in particular in the social and solidarity economy. New decent jobs would be created by enhancing energy efficiency and promoting more sustainable consumption and production patterns, as well as by harnessing the ageing factor.

100. Concrete policies must be adopted that promoted respect for labour standards in the procedures for public procurement contracts and other elements of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda; ensured the implementation of the ILO Recommendation No. 204 concerning the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy; provided support to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, including via innovative financial mechanisms and labour-responsible business practices; ensured compliance with adequate occupational safety and health standards; promoted the creation of green jobs as part of cities' efforts to act on climate change and to transition to more resource-efficient and low-carbon patterns; and promoted social dialogue at the local level, engaging workers and enterprises together with local authorities to discuss labour-related challenges and plan solutions. Decent work must be an integral part of urban policies and management.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.